2011

A Holistic Approach to Leading in Dangerous Situations

Patrick J. Sweeney
U.S. Army, United States Military Academy

Michael D. Matthews
United States Military Academy

Patrick J. Sweeney, Col, U.S. Army, United States Military Academy
Michael D. Matthews, United States Military Academy

CHAPTER 20

A Holistic Approach to Leading in Dangerous Situations

Patrick J. Sweeney and Michael D. Matthews

D angerous contexts place unique psychological, physical, and social demands on leaders and organizations. To prepare for these unique demands, leaders, group members, and organizations need to develop greater levels of trustworthiness, psychological hardiness, and cohesion and stronger leader–follower partnership relationships compared to leaders and organizations that operate in non-dangerous contexts. Given that the demands of dangerous contexts affect all individuals and their relationships with the group and the organization's systems, a systems-based perspective seems to be a logical foundation for fostering holistic development to prepare for the unique challenges of leading and operating in dangerous situations.

A systems approach to understanding the impact of context provides leaders with an appreciation of how the unique challenges of leading in dangerous contexts influence the interdependencies between leaders, followers, their relationships, and organizations. Also, a holistic developmental model with a systems view presents leaders with a common framework for understanding context impact, a shared language for discussing development, and common targets for assessing and engaging in purposeful development. Figure 20.1 introduces such a model to help leaders build their own and their organizations' capacity to lead in dangerous contexts.

A HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL FOR INDIVIDUALS OPERATING IN DANGEROUS CONTEXTS

This model focuses on interrelated psychological structures, capacities, traits, and skills—that is, worldview (perspective), self-awareness, sense of agency, self-regulation, self-motivation, and social awareness and connection to others—that facilitate the development of leaders' and followers' capacities to operate in dangerous contexts. The model acknowledges the influence that
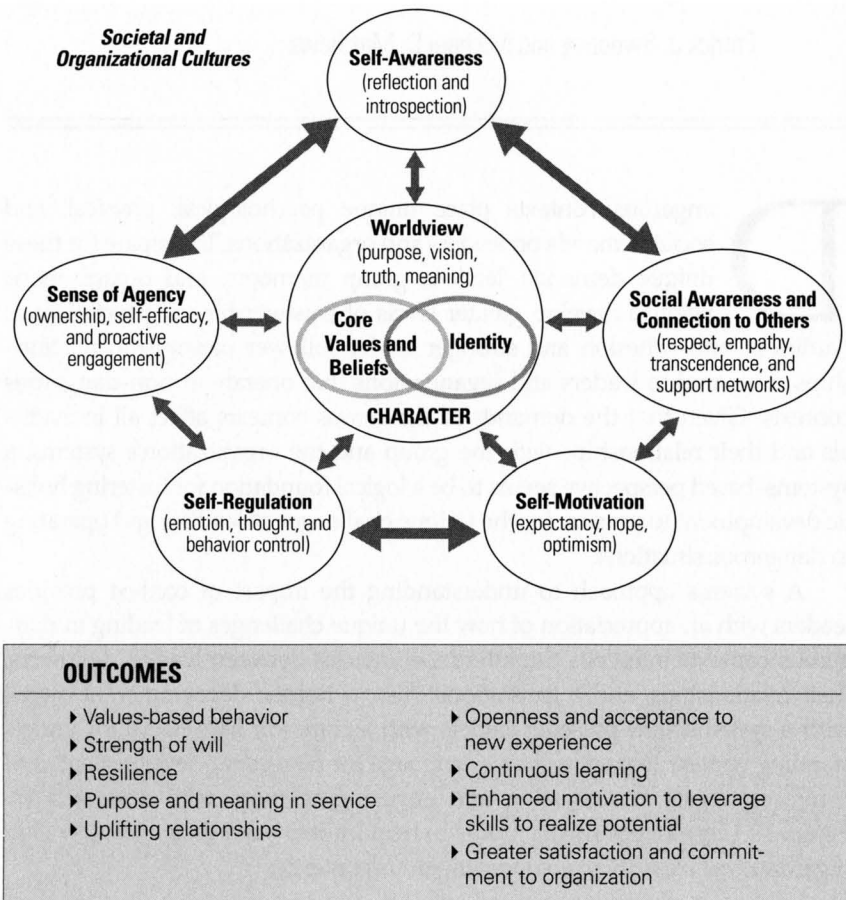

FIGURE 20.1 A holistic development model for dangerous contexts leaders and organizations

Source: Adapted from Patrick J. Sweeney, Sean T. Hannah, and Don M. Snider, "Domain of the Human Spirit," in *Forging the Warrior's Character: Moral Precepts from the Cadet Prayer,* ed. D. Snider and L. Matthews (Sisters, Ore.: Jerico, 2007; repr. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2008), 64.

membership in various social groups—such as a unit, a profession, a society, and so on—have on the development of leaders and followers. This is a versatile model in that the focal point for development can be the individual leader or a follower or even a group. Themes from the various chapters in this volume relate to the model. The process of examining themes through the model provides leaders greater insight into leader and leadership development.

Worldview

The foundation of who leaders and followers are, how they view and interpret events, and most important, how they act and make meaning from their experiences depends on their worldview, which is comprised of an individual's most central core values and beliefs concerning purposes and meaning in life, identity, truths about the world, and visions for realizing one's full potential.[1] Leaders' worldviews are the lens they use to observe, interpret, and make sense of life, events, and their actions.[2] It influences attention, perceptions, thoughts, motivation, behavior, and meaning-making and embodies the foundation of leaders' and followers' character. A person's worldview regulates inputs and outputs from the external environment, allocates attention and memory resources, facilitates the processing of information, and influences the execution of behavior. Thus, worldview needs to be the central target of development in any program preparing leaders and followers to meet the psychological and social demands of operating in dangerous contexts.

To develop one's worldview, a person first needs to gain awareness of his or her components (e.g., core values and beliefs, assumptions about the world, identity, and so on) and internal workings (e.g., how assumptions influence perceptions and behavior) through a process of reflective thought. This may be done in a variety of ways, ranging from formal education to life experiences that expose one to different ways of viewing and conceiving of the world. Exposure to different perspectives may alter one's worldview or alternatively reinforce it. An array of lenses through which to view the world tends to facilitate reflection and introspection about one's own perspectives, create openness to learning from diverse views and ideas, and possibly allow for a less judgmental approach to differences among people.

Challenging and adverse experiences (e.g., having a demanding job, being passed over for promotion, experiencing a death in the family, being injured on the job, confronting ethical issues, and the like) also facilitate the development of one's worldview by pushing to the limit one's established system of understanding the world. When individuals cannot make sense of their experiences, feelings of disequilibrium or uneasiness may ensue. The need to

restore balance or equilibrium might drive one to build additional complexity into existing meaning-making systems until an event is understood and unease reduced.[3] Thus, experiences that take people out of their comfort zones or usual ways of viewing life promote the development of worldview.

Core Values, Identity, and Character. One of the major themes of *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* is the importance of leaders' and followers' character for operating in dangerous environments. Character can be viewed as the extent to which one's core values are integrated into one's self-identity. The more leaders and followers define themselves by their core values, the more consistent they will behave in accordance with those values in all situations.[4] Such people use their values to define themselves; that is, they become their values. One reasonable assumption is that the core values of an individual who chooses to work in dangerous contexts would tend to have values in line with an organization operating in such an environment and that espouses values of duty, service, integrity, loyalty, courage, and respect. Being a person of character is an integral part of the identity of dangerous context leaders and "warriors," defined here as leaders who take on tough challenges, place duty first, never accept defeat, never quit, and never leave a fallen comrade on the battlefield (commitment to teammates). Once leaders integrate the warrior ethos into their identities, they approach leading and living with a proactive, resilient, and winning spirit.[5]

A leader's character provides the moral compass that guides decisions and behavior, especially when using lethal force. Some people draw courage and strength from leaders who model courage in threatening conditions. Character is a motivational source for perseverance. When group members are physically, emotionally, and mentally fatigued, they look to their leader, who models perseverance, to summon the strength to continue the mission and to accomplish it. Leaders modeling good coping skills, based on being true to their own and their organization's values, positively influence followers' coping skills, which promotes resilience to adversity. Character also forms the foundation for leaders and followers to understand and make meaning out of their experiences. Furthermore, leaders and followers who model their organization's values are likely to earn a reputation of trustworthiness, which facilitates the development of trust in others and enhances the ability to influence (lead).[6]

Purpose. Finding purpose in serving is important in preparing leaders and followers to meet the psychological challenges of leading and operating in dangerous contexts. Purpose is a powerful motivational force for transcending self-interest and facing the risks of injury or death to serve others. Core values linked with a sense of purpose promote the strength of will to endure,

bounce back from (resilience), and make meaning out of adverse or traumatic experiences. For instance, Admiral James Stockdale endured eight years of torture and indignities in a North Vietnamese POW camp by sustaining the belief (faith) that he would get out and turn the experience into a defining event in his life (purpose).[7] Furthermore, getting members to rally around a common, worthy purpose influences the development of trust and task cohesion within teams and also facilitates the use of transformational leadership behaviors.

Another important theme is that leaders be in the business of shaping meaning within their organizations. Shared meaning-making within a group influences leaders' and followers' worldviews. Exchanging perspectives provides members a wealth of information with which to test assumptions about the world, to redefine truths, to understand larger purposes, gain insight into how values influence decisions and behavior, and find the limits of their current way of thinking. Leaders can proactively engage in shared meaning-making by identifying the purpose of missions for followers, sharing rationales for decisions (and how they align with the organization's core values), being transparent with information, and providing their team an opportunity to conduct an after-action review upon completion of each mission. Every opportunity leaders have to engage group members is an opportunity to shape and strengthen their worldviews.

Self-Awareness

Families, schools, teams, and other social groups have a tremendous impact on shaping general worldviews. Leaders and followers transform these general views into personalized perspectives through the process of reflection and introspection. Through reflection on core values and beliefs, identity, purpose and meaning in life, and truths, an individual can begin to "customize" his or her worldview. Reflection also plays an important role in the development of identity and the integration of core values into it or the formation of one's character. The ability to start to identify and assess identity, values, truths, purpose, and vision provides individuals with the autonomy to take charge of their development and to regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behavior.

Awareness of one's capabilities, core values, identity, purpose, mental models, and perception of truths plays a key role in managing stress, promoting courageous actions, building hardiness, enhancing perseverance, and mitigating post-traumatic stress symptoms. Self-awareness allows leaders to frame experiences so they are viewed as challenges that have the purpose of increasing growth. Awareness of contextual variables and how they influence internal states lets individuals engage in proactive strategies to manage stress

or harness additional motivational forces to effectively adapt. Also, a good sense of oneself influences ethical decisions and behavior and provides an individual with a firm foundation through which to interpret and make meaning out of experiences. Knowing oneself and being authentic is important to the development of relationships based on trust and engaging in higher order leadership behaviors, such as transformational and authentic leadership.

Sense of Agency

Agency entails leaders assuming control and responsibility for their actions and effective functioning. Leaders make a commitment to intentionally seek out opportunities for growth and ways to improve their effectiveness. They accept their shortfalls and realize they are the primary authors of their actions and developmental journeys toward being leaders of character. Agency is largely determined by leaders' self-efficacy or personal beliefs. If leaders believe that they can positively influence their destiny, they will engage in proactive, purposeful actions to take advantage of opportunities to do so. Thus, leaders' behavior is controlled internally, not dictated by environmental forces. Efficacy beliefs influence leaders' decisions (e.g., take the challenge or play it safe), how much effort they expend toward a goal, the strength of will to persevere when confronted with obstacles and danger, self-enabling or self-hindering thought patterns, ability to adapt and cope with changing circumstances, and levels of stress they experience. These beliefs also influence one's regulation of thought processes, emotions, and motivation.[8]

Leaders can enhance their sense of agency through building self-efficacy beliefs, which are bolstered through the development of competence. Throughout *Leadership in Dangerous Situations*, competence emerges as a primary factor in determining leader effectiveness. Realistic training that replicates the conditions of dangerous contexts develops the skill sets—that is, decision making, technical and tactical knowledge, stress management, and social skills—and the mental models that raise members' self-efficacy beliefs. These beliefs have a synergistic effect by allowing leaders to apply various skill sets in adapting to situations. The more competence leaders possess, the more diverse and broad their plans of action (scripts), the greater the options to adapt to uncertainty, all of which bolsters self-efficacy and agency. Skilled leaders who doubt themselves can undermine their own performance. Thus, effective performance depends on competence as well as efficacy beliefs.[9]

Physical courage is developed by placing leaders in training situations (e.g., live-fire training exercises) with increasing threat. Similarly, training exercises designed to place leaders in morally ambiguous situations like those they

might experience in the real world or requiring them to incur risk to stand-up for their group members or beliefs assists in developing personal responsibility and moral courage. Each time leaders successfully demonstrate courageous behavior in a training setting, efficacy beliefs deepen, as does agency.

Tough, realistic training can be used to develop stress management skills and resilience. Self-efficacy beliefs play a key role in leaders accurately assessing their ability to meet the demands of dangerous situations and assist in managing stress. Training that introduces adversity helps develop leaders' coping and resilience strategies as well as their meaning-making abilities. Each time they successfully handle a tough challenge or setback, their efficacy beliefs should increase, along with agency.

From a collective perspective, realistic training facilitates the development of trust between group members, enhances team cohesion, increases group viability, builds team resilience, and most important, enhances the team's perception of its efficacy. Collective efficacy lifts morale, assists in the management of stress, and facilitates the mitigation of post-traumatic stress symptoms.[10] Shared perceptions of efficacy beliefs are instrumental in a team's performance and resilience to adversity.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is the ability to monitor, understand, assess, and control one's thoughts, goals, emotions, and behavior—or the ability to lead the self.[11] Self-awareness and agency play significant roles in the development of an individual's ability to self-regulate.[12] Leaders who can assess their mental models for accuracy and bias, and understand the source of their emotions and how their patterns of thought influence motivation and behavior, are empowered to implement measures to control them and start to master self-influence.[13] This ability to reflect on the causes and consequences of past patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors allows leaders to choose future patterns of thought and behavior that align with values, beliefs, and goals. Thus, self-regulation is a prerequisite for integrity, authentic leadership, and development as a leader and a person.[14]

Self-regulation also influences leaders' and followers' abilities to maintain attention focus, perseverance to accomplish a task, and strength of will to behave in accordance with their own and their organization's values. One's ability to monitor and regulate thoughts, emotions, and behavior is a resource that can be developed through self-awareness and practice. An individual's self-regulation resource can also be depleted through overuse and fatigue.[15] Superb physical fitness and disciplined sleep plans serve to mitigate the rate

of depletion of this scarce resource. Leaders and group members need to be aware when their self-regulation strength is depleted to the level where it is about to adversely influence judgment and behavior.

Self-regulation plays a pivotal role in developing leaders' psychological body armor to meet the unique challenges of operating in dangerous contexts. From an individual perspective, self-regulation influences leaders' ability to act courageously, moral and ethical behaviors, resilience, stress management, and meaning-making. Regarding courage, leaders and followers use self-regulation to acknowledge the threats in a situation, control their emotions, and motivate themselves to take action to accomplish their duties. In terms of stress and resilience, leaders use regulation processes to frame perceptions of the situational demands (challenge versus threat), assess capabilities, and execute adaptive strategies for coping with stress and accomplishing the mission.

When confronted with adversity, self-regulation provides leaders a sense of control over their thoughts, emotional reactions, and behavioral responses to the event. The regulation process assists them in evaluating the cause of the event, developing plans to prevent similar events in the future, and most important, how to adaptively respond to the event. Leaders use their self-regulation abilities to frame the event in a way that assists the meaning-making process. The ability to understand and control one's thoughts, emotions, and behavior promotes within leaders a sense of agency, optimism, and resilience to handle the challenges of dangerous contexts.

Self-regulation is critical to effective decision making in high stress and dynamic situations. Leaders must be able to control their own emotions, balance competing goals (e.g., accomplish the mission but also minimize danger to the team members), and manage their thoughts to make adaptive decisions. Self-regulation provides leaders with the ability to remain calm and composed in dangerous and crisis environments. This skill is honed by decision making during realistic training and reflective thought.

In terms of the social perspective, lessons from the various chapters here indicate that leaders' self-regulation is instrumental in the development of trust, cohesion, team resilience, morale, and influence. In the area of trust, leaders' ability to influence their attitudes and direct their behavior toward developing competence, demonstrating good values, and genuine caring for members helps them to earn a reputation of credibility and gives them the opportunity to establish positive relationships that foster trust. Trust bonds in leader-follower relationships assist in the development of cohesion within the team. Furthermore, we propose that leaders with good self-regulation abilities are more likely to set high standards, focus on building team competence through tough training, communicate in a clear and open manner, and work

cooperatively, which bolsters team resilience compared to low self-regulating leaders. Team resilience coupled with trusted, self-regulating leaders serves to bolster morale or the general well-being of organizations.[16] Finally, leaders' ability to control their thoughts, emotions, and behavior facilitates the development of their power bases—expert and referent—related to the person. High levels of expert and referent power allows leaders to exercise a higher level of influence through the use of transformational and authentic leadership actions.

Self-Motivation

Self-motivation refers to leaders' and followers' ability to marshal various internal sources to drive action, in this case, in the face of risk or to persist toward a goal when faced with challenges. The ability to motivate oneself is closely linked to an individual's efficacy beliefs. Leaders and followers who expect or believe they can perform a required behavior to achieve a goal are more likely to engage and persist in that specific, goal-directed behavior.[17] Similarly, leaders' and followers' beliefs about their ability to control their thoughts, feelings, and behavior influence their intentional attempts to regulate or lead the self. Thus, self-efficacy is an important internal source of motivation that is developed through realistic training, education, and reflective thought.

Behaving consistently true to one's identity and core values is another important internal source of self-motivation. The more centrally integrated a person's core values are with his or her self-identity, the stronger the internal force to act congruently with those values and identity, thus preserving the concept of self.[18] As the integration of core values into identity develops, the sources influencing behavior shift from external to internal. Therefore, leaders' and followers' actions become consistently more values based and authentic in response to internal motivational forces. They behave in a consistently moral and ethical manner because that is who they are. One's desire to stay true to core values and identity provides the wellspring of motivation to strengthen an individual's will to persevere and prevail.

Striving to achieve a worthy purpose is another powerful internal motivating force that influences behavior in dangerous contexts. A higher purpose inspires people to step beyond self-interest, to the point of risking their safety or lives, to serve or achieve something greater than themselves. Purpose provides people with the ability to frame their actions in a larger perspective and provides meaning. Admiral Stockdale was able to endure the horrifying experience of being a prisoner of war for eight years because he found purpose in surviving with honor and made it the defining point of his life. As Victor Frankl gleaned from his experience in the concentration camps, if

people can find meaning and purpose in their suffering, there is almost nothing they cannot endure.[19]

One's desire to survive and also to uphold a commitment to shared trust between team members is a powerful internal motivating force that influences behavior in dangerous contexts. An individual's will to survive can motivate one to engage in behaviors up to the point of taking another human's life in service to one's country or society. A person's commitment to fulfilling the trust that teammates have placed in him or her acts as a powerful motivational force. Studies conducted in combat zones found survival and upholding trust to be two primary sources of motivation that get soldiers to fight.[20]

Various chapters in this book proffer that self-motivation impacts strength of will, physical and moral courage, resilience to stress and adversity, meaning-making, and trust development. The strength of leaders' and followers' will or spirit rests in their motivation to act in a manner consistent with their core values and beliefs, identity, and achievement of their purpose.[21] Self-motivation influences one's ability to act courageously and in a moral and ethical manner. When confronted with situations that are dangerous or contain a moral or ethical challenge, one must balance the need for survival and social approval against the internal need to act consistently with core values and beliefs, identity, and purpose. Likewise, self-motivation plays a significant role in bolstering resilience to stress and adversity and making meaning out of one's experiences. Again, a worthy purpose that provides meaning or the desire to maintain consistency with oneself tends to fuel coping strategies that promote resilience as well as efforts to understand experiences.

Social Awareness and Connection to Others

Social awareness refers to an individual's realization that relationships with others play an important role in one's development and that one needs certain attributes to build positive connections with others. Uplifting relationships with important persons (i.e., family, mentors, teachers, coaches, and so on) assist in developing core values and beliefs, discovering and creating identity, finding truth in the world, learning moral and ethical decision making, understanding and making meaning from experiences, and determining one's purpose and direction in life in order to realize one's potential.[22]

To harness the developmental potential of positive relationships with others, one must be able to demonstrate respect, empathy, compassion, transcendence of self-interest, and trust in others.[23] Regarding respect, it is important that an individual recognize that other people have the right to hold different values, beliefs, and cultural practices and that one must, without giving up one's beliefs, show others due consideration and openness to these alternative

perspectives. Showing respect to others' worldviews validates them as humans on equal footing and opens the door to the development of relationships based on trust. Moreover, empathy—the ability to see the world through another person's lens to understand their situation in life, needs, goals, motivations, culture, and potential feelings—affects one's ability to demonstrate respect and also facilitates the establishment of cooperative relationships. Compassion, being moved to assist others in reducing suffering or improving themselves by providing support, communicates care that facilitates the establishment of positive relationships.

An individual's ability to transcend or step beyond self-interest to work cooperatively for the good of all in the relationship facilitates the development of trust. Transcendence of self-interest is important because it empowers leaders and followers to serve or strive to achieve something greater than themselves and engage in selfless behavior. Exhibiting selfless behavior in relationships reassures all parties involved that the common good will be served, which promotes trust. Furthermore, one's willingness to trust others or willingness to be vulnerable to others' actions communicates intent to deepen a relationship and initiates the trust building cycle. Being vulnerable to another person's actions provides the individual with information about their character, motives, and competence to determine if one wants to pursue the relationship at a deeper level. After an individual extends trust, others will feel a psychological pressure to reciprocate in kind.[24]

Positive connections with others are critical for one's development and social resilience.[25] An individual may possess the requisite attributes to form positive relationships with others, but still not perceive that he or she is connected with others. Developing robust and diverse social networks to assist one in solving work and personal problems, obtaining feedback, providing a safe forum in which to share thoughts and feelings, and benefiting from career coaching are continuous processes. Here we introduce the concept of network efficacy, which entail's a person's beliefs about the ability to leverage networks to provide or obtain needed support. Thus, feeling connected with others entails the skills and abilities to build robust and diverse networks of trusting relationships and also involves one's efficacy beliefs about the ability to connect to and leverage existing networks to provide the needed social support.

Relationship networks are critical in assisting leaders and followers in meeting the unique psychological and social challenges of leading and operating in dangerous contexts. Support networks are important in managing stress and promoting resilience. Feeling connected and supported by others tends to boost people's perceptions of their capabilities by giving them access to various adaptive problem-solving or coping strategies, a forum to express

feelings and thoughts, and exposure to diverse perspectives to assist in making meaning and finding purpose in the stress or adversity they face. Such connections and support help reduce stress, promote resilience, and mitigate symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Social support networks can also serve as powerful motivational forces to encourage leaders and followers to behave in a courageous and honorable manner. Significant others modeling behavior consistent with the organizations' values creates a social reality that communicates that the individual is expected to behave in an honorable fashion. In these situations, support from others provides external pressure that is congruent with and amplifies a person's internal motivation to behave consistently with one's value and identity.

The bonds that unite people in social networks are based on trust. Leaders' and followers' credibility (competence, character, and care), the quality of the cooperative relationships they build, and the supportiveness of an organization's culture and systems influence the development of trust. Competence encompasses the basic social abilities and skills needed to develop quality relationships. An individual's ability to develop positive relationships contributes to the development of trust.[26] Trust enhances the forging of social bonds, team viability, perceptions of collective efficacy, and organizational resilience needed to meet the psychological and social challenges associated with dangerous situations.

Relationships based on trust provide leaders with the opportunity to exercise the high level of influence associated with transformational and authentic leadership that induces followers to change the way they think about themselves, their responsibilities, and the values and purpose of their organization. Trust relationships are also critical for influencing people and actions across cultures and in prison settings. Strong bonds of trust in leader–follower relationships promote morale (group well-being) and mitigate post-traumatic stress symptoms. Therefore, leaders' and followers' ability to build relationships based on trust determines the level of perceived support, the level of influence they can exercise, and the viability of the group.

Societal and Organizational Cultures

Leaders' and followers' developmental journeys are influenced on multiple levels: individual self-development, relationship networks, and organization cultures. As previously discussed, an individual's development efforts are influenced by the various social networks to which he or she has connections. An individual's group memberships have a significant affect on development by influencing one's worldview and relationships. Most people's worldviews are shaped by their families, philosophical or faith groups, schools, teams,

communities, and society. Groups possess, communicate, and hold members accountable to a set of common values, norms, assumptions about how to operate and function, collective identity, and purpose—that is, culture.[27]

Living and working in various organizational cultures creates for people social realities that influence their perceptions of right and wrong, values to lead and live by, how to treat each other, what provides work and life meaning, and noble purposes to pursue. Organizational cultures can reinforce a person's values, identity, truths about the world, meaning, and purpose as well as broaden their perspective. On the other hand, organizational cultures can also have a detrimental impact on one's core values, identity, and perspective. This is why most parents are concerned about who their children's close friends are during their formative, adolescent years; friends networks have the potential to significantly influence the development of worldview.

Leaders can leverage an organization's culture to assist in shaping and reinforcing each member's development of worldview and the various psychological attributes that support it (see Figure 20.1). The organization's core values and purpose must be clearly articulated and communicated to all the members of the organization. The purpose should be of a high-enough order to motivate members to transcend their self-interest. People seek groups whose values and purpose are congruent with their own.

Another important part of clarifying the organization's culture is the vision statement. The vision communicates to group members the compelling future state the organization is moving toward if it accomplishes its purpose; it communicates hope and stirs passion. Regardless of the diversity of the organization, the culture is the cornerstone that unites members in a common purpose and a shared belief system to which they commit to hold themselves and others accountable. Thus, culture is a powerful mechanism for exercising influence and also a force that can bring people together in a worthy quest.

One of the most powerful ways to communicate an organization's culture is through role models. Select formal leaders based on the embodiment of an organization's core values and their belief in the core purpose and vision. Formal leaders who are role models help ensure that the organization's espoused values are the values actually being practiced. Also, these role models play a significant part in assisting group members in making meaning regarding core values, purpose, vision, and their duties.

Reviews of organizational policies, procedures, practices, and systems are necessary to ensure that espoused values, norms, purpose, and vision are being communicated accurately and reinforced. A review of the organization's espoused values and perceived values in practice is a good place for leaders to start to identify gaps because policies, procedures, practices, and systems tend

to take on a life of their own. Review each one and ask whether it is needed and whether it supports the espoused culture. For instance, if teamwork is one of the organization's core values and it is common practice to evaluate and reward members only on individual performance, then the organization's systems are hindering the practice of this value.

Impact on Individual Development. An organization's culture has a tremendous impact on individuals' preparation and development to meet the unique challenges of operating in a dangerous environment. Organizations that value learning and development allocate necessary resources, such as time, money, quality people, facilities, and equipment, to conduct realistic training and education to ensure that every member is prepared to perform their duties in the face of danger. After each training or educational event, the organization conducts formal after-action reviews (AARs) to facilitate learning and also to decide how to improve in the future. Such investment in development and learning bolsters members' self-efficacy, which contributes to effective performance, helps manage stress, and promotes resilience.

An organization's values can provide members with a reinforced moral compass to raise awareness of individual responsibility, determine what is right, and act in a moral and ethical manner. These values, along with the organization's purpose, influence the development of member's identities and provide a source from which to draw strength during adversity. The organization's values and purpose also shape members' meaning-making and attitudes about seeking help. Organizations that view seeking behavioral health as an adaptive means for maintaining the human system (center of gravity of the organization), not as a weakness, promote resiliency and mitigate the symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Organizations that value open communication and empower members promote individual agency and efficacy. Open communication allows for mutual influence, leverages the collective wisdom of the team, facilitates learning, allows for the expression of concern (especially on moral and ethical issues), promotes shared meaning-making, and provides members with a sense of control. Empowerment gives members the agency to make or influence decisions to adapt to dynamic situations, use their full array of talents, and have some degree of control. Both open communication and empowerment influence the development of trust at the individual and collective levels.

Impact on Relationships. An organization's culture, policies, procedures, practices, and systems affect the development of relationships within and outside the organization. If the organization's culture entails values such as loyalty, teamwork, integrity, selfless service, and duty, people within the

organization are likely to behave in a cooperative manner to achieve a common purpose that enhances the development of positive relationships. Likewise, organizational practices, policies, and systems that encourage fairness and open and honest communication promote the development of relationships. Rewards and performance evaluation systems can have a pervasive influence on the development of relationships in organizations. If both of the systems recognize, assess, and reward cooperative behavior and collective achievement, relationships based on trust will flourish. Organizations that recognize, assess, and reward individual achievement only, hinder the development of cooperative relationships.[28]

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT FOR DANGEROUS CONTEXT ORGANIZATIONS

The holistic development model presented here can also be used for developing organizations to operate in dangerous contexts. The focal point for development simply changes from the individual to the organization. Again, the power of the model lies in its providing leaders with a common framework for thinking about organizational development, a common language for discussing development, and most important, offering specific targets for purposeful development. Below is a brief discussion on how to apply the model to an organization.

Worldview

The organization's culture entails its core values and beliefs, assumptions about the world, norms governing how to interact, truths, and purpose. An organization's culture is the lens through which it perceives itself and the world. Culture is the organization's worldview. Leaders who invest time and effort in shaping and developing their organizations' culture are leveraging a very powerful source of influence.

Self-Awareness

Organizations need to be aware of their internal operating principles and systems. It is through purposeful reflection and introspection that leaders will see the true culture in practice. Taking the organization through a vision development process is a superb mechanism for getting members to reflect on core values and purpose and to construct a shared meaning of them. Using participative vision development processes gets group members involved and promotes reflection on the organization's strengths and weaknesses and what it

needs to do to adapt to a constantly changing world. Conducting formal AARs after major events provides members the time to reflect on their performance and make recommendations to improve in the future. Also, periodic review of policies, procedures, practices, and systems through an organization inspection program allows leaders to ensure these structures are synchronized with espoused values, purpose, and vision.

Sense of Agency

As with an individual, organizational agency involves the belief that the group can control its destiny and a commitment to proactively engage in activities to do so. At the heart of agency are collective efficacy beliefs. Members of the group must believe they have the skills, means, and leadership necessary to adapt to a changing world. Organizations that invest in the development, education, and training of its members are bolstering collective efficacy. Also, participative, transparent strategic-planning practices assist the organization in identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. An awareness of the changing environment allows leaders to develop and execute plans to ensure the organization remains viable in the future and boosts agency and collective efficacy.

Self-Regulation

At the collective level, self-regulation involves culture, policies, practices, procedures, and systems to shape and control how the organization views and executes its role and purpose. The art is to develop organizational structures that empower individuals but at the same time shape common thought patterns and behaviors. Leaders engaging in open communications and shared meaning-making assist in shaping how the organization reacts emotionally to its performance and adversity. Leaders can draw on the organization's values and purpose to assist members in understanding and making meaning out of experiences. Communicating the hard facts and how the organization will adapt and be successful in the future assists in developing resilience and optimism.

Self-Motivation

An organization's core values and purpose serve as important motivational sources that govern collective behavior. The desire to maintain consistency with their collective and individual identities drives members to behave consistently with values and purpose. Collective efficacy beliefs are also a powerful motivating force that governs members' pursuit of organizational goals.

Social Awareness and Connection to Others

Organizations need to develop within their culture the attributes of respect, empathy, compassion, transcendence of self-interest, and trust of others to form positive relationships within the parent organization, the community they serve, or the countries in which they operate in order to increase effectiveness. Feedback from outside constituents provides organizations with information they can use to further their development to enhance effectiveness. Also, an individual organization can leverage outside organizational networks to provide necessary support to accomplish a mission. Thus, an organization's ability to connect positively with outside organizations promotes development and enhances effectiveness.

Societal and Organizational Cultures

The culture of the parent organization and to some extent the cultures of constituent organizations have the ability to influence the culture of a subordinate organization. The parent organization has a significant influence on a sub-organization's core values and beliefs, collective identity, purpose, norms governing behavior, and assumptions. Furthermore, the parent organization usually has policies, procedures, practices, and systems to ensure that subordinate organizations share similar espoused cultures. Leaders have the responsibility and opportunity to ensure that the espoused culture is the culture in practice and to extend the culture. Constituent organizations that one serves or supports can also impact an organization's culture. For instance, if an organization is conducting major operations overseas and forecasts it will continue to do so in the future, it might want to change its selection, training, rewards, and evaluation systems to reflect the importance of cultural competence.

The holistic development model provides leaders a common framework and language through which to assist in preparing individuals and organizations to meet the unique challenges of operating in dangerous contexts. This approach centers development on individuals' and organizations' worldviews. The model illustrates as developmental targets the supporting psychological attributes, states, and capabilities, and the primary targets of social influence.

It is important to note that societal and organizational cultures can have a powerful influence on the shaping of individuals' worldviews and also on the importance individuals place on the supporting psychological components of the model. For instance, a person from a collective society is likely to have core values and assumptions about the world that subordinate the individual's interest in order to support cooperative interaction with others. Also, this

person is likely to place a greater emphasis on the social awareness and connection with others component of the model to gain information for forming one's identity. The power of this model is that it is holistic and universal.

The team of authors for this volume hopes it has furthered your understanding of the unique challenges associated with leading in dangerous contexts and will contribute to making you a more effective leader or operator. We are honored by the opportunity to contribute to your development. Thank you for your service, and continue to lead the way.

NOTES

1. Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality,* 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 80–97; and Kenneth I. Pargament and Patrick J. Sweeney, "Building Spiritual Fitness in the Army: An Innovative Approach to a Vital Aspect of Human Development," *American Psychologist* 66 (2011): 58–64.

2. Patrick J. Sweeney, Sean T. Hannah, and Don M. Snider, "Domain of the Human Spirit," in *Forging the Warrior's Character: Moral Precepts from the Cadet Prayer,* ed. D. Snider and L. Matthews (Sisters, Ore.: Jerico, 2007), 63–72; Patrick J. Sweeney, Sean T. Hannah, and Don M. Snider, "Domain of the Human Spirit," in *Forging the Warrior's Character: Moral Precepts from the Cadet Prayer,* ed. D. Snider and L. Matthews (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2008), 28–34.

3. Ellen Van Velsor and Wilfred H. Drath, "A Lifelong Developmental Perspective on Leader Development," in *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leader Development,* ed. Cynthia D. McCauley and Ellen Van Velsor, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 388–393.

4. Augusto Blasi, "The Development of Identity: Some Implications for Moral Functioning," in *The Moral Self,* ed. G. Noam and T. Wren (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 99–122.

5. U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership: Competent, Confident, and Agile, FM 6-22* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 4–10.

6. Patrick Sweeney, Vaida Thompson, and Hart Blanton, "Trust and Influence in Combat: An Interdependence Model," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 39 (2009): 235–264.

7. Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 83–85.

8. Albert Bandura, *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1997), 3.

9. Ibid., 36–37.

10. Gregory L. Belenky, Shabtai Noy, and Zahava Solomon, "Battle Stress: The Israeli Experience," *Military Review*, July 1985, 11–20.

11. Roy F. Baumeister, *The Cultural Animal: Human Nature, Meaning, and Social Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 310–315; and Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), xi–xii.

12. Bandura, *Self-Efficacy,* 1.

13. David V. Day, Michelle M. Harrison, and Stanley M. Halpin, *An Integrative Approach to Leader Development: Connecting Adult Development, Identity, and Expertise* (New York: Routledge, 2009): 191–194; and Sara B. Algoe and Barbara L. Fredrickson, "Emotional Fitness and the Movement of Affective Science from Lab to Field," *American Psychologist* 66 (2011): 35–42.

14. Day, Harrison, and Halpin, *An Integrative Approach,* 191–194.

15. Ibid.

16. Christopher Peterson, Nansook Park, and Patrick J. Sweeney, "Group Well-Being: Morale from a Positive Psychology Perspective," *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 57 (2008): 19–36.

17. Bandura, *Self-Efficacy,* 3.

18. Blasi, "The Development of Identity," 99–122.

19. Victor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1994), 86–88.

20. S. Stouffer et al., *The American Soldier: Combat and Its Aftermath,* vol. 2 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 136–149.

21. Sweeney, Hannah, and Snider, "Domain of the Human Spirit," 55–99.

22. Pargament and Sweeney, "Building Spiritual Fitness in the Army," 58–64.

23. Daniel Goleman, "What Makes a Leader?" *Harvard Business Review* 76, no. 6 (1998): 93–102.

24. Harold Kelley and John Thibaut, *Interpersonal Relationships: A Theory of Interdependence* (New York: Wiley, 1978), 231–237.

25. John T. Cacioppo, Harry T. Reis, and Alex J. Zautra, "Social Resilience: The Value of Social Fitness with an Application to the Military," *American Psychologist* 66 (2011): 43–51.

26. Kelley and Thibaut, *Interpersonal Relationships,* 231–237.

27. Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 3–23.

28. See Chapter 9, in this volume: Patrick J. Sweeney, Kurt T. Dirks, David C. Sundberg, and Paul B. Lester, "Trust: The Key to Leading When Lives Are on the Line."